



February 2004

FrontLine Employee

A newsletter from the Employee Advisory Service (EAS)

Call EAS: Olympia (360) 753-3260 Seattle (206) 281-6315 Spokane (509) 482-3686

Web: <http://hr.dop.wa.gov/eas.html>

Play More, Live Longer

If you are working and postponing recreation and leisure activities until you can retire, consider fitting in some of these activities now. It might help you live longer and improve your mental health. A recent study of 107 sets of senior twins has shown that those who participated in leisure activities in early and middle adulthood had a reduced risk of Alzheimer's disease. In the study, risk was reduced regardless of education level or degree of physical exercise. Another earlier study by the Harvard School of Public Health in 1999 showed that seniors who had an active social life lived longer. *What it means:* Social and leisure activities may be as important to long-term physical and mental health as physical exercise!

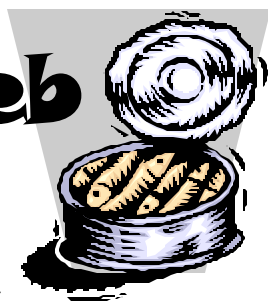
Source: Journal of Gerontology Series, Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences B: 58:P.249-255.



Count Carbs On the Web

Are you "low carbing" to lose weight? If so, you don't have to wonder how many grams of carbohydrates are in your food anymore.

A free web resource, www.carbohydrate-counter.org, helps dieters find the carbohydrate content in thousands of foods — even by brand name! Use it to pick low-carb foods for a low-carbohydrate diet. It also is useful for diabetics who need to watch carbohydrate levels. (Before dieting, always consult your doctor.)



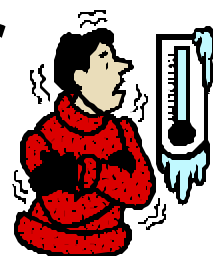
"Brand" Yourself!

Companies brand their products with attributes like quality, service, safety, security, and dependability. You can do the same with your reputation. Think of agency coworkers you know who are regarded highly for returning calls promptly, finishing work early, remaining calm in a crisis, or always having a smile for those they meet. They've been branded. What positive features or characteristics of your work style do you want others to think of when your name comes to mind? Take advantage of the natural way all of us process and sort information and make it work for you. Think of yourself as a branded product, decide what sets you apart from others, and make whatever you do carry that unique and special attribute others will soon remember.



Cold Weather Precautions

Take precautions in cold weather, especially if you work outdoors in transportation, maritime, or agriculture. OSHA's Cold Stress Card (free on line at <http://www.osha.gov> then click on **P** for publications) provides guidance on how to combat and prevent many cold-weather injuries. Certain medications can increase the risk of cold-weather injuries. So can health conditions that affect circulatory health. Talk to your doctor to learn more. One good tip: When trying to warm up, choose a sports beverage. Warm it, put it in an insulated container, and have it on hand. Avoid coffee, soda, hot chocolate, and especially alcohol.



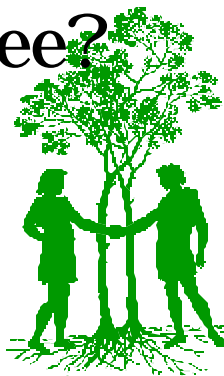
Are You Young & Reckless?



As a **younger worker**, you are 80 percent more likely to be injured on the job, and that injury is more likely to come in the first six months of your employment. That's a key message in the latest report from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. Many developmental factors contribute to the risk young workers face. Here's how to reduce your risk:

1. Deal effectively with personal issues and conflicts in your life that can distract you on the job and increase risk of injury — home and family issues, socializing, that new car, etc. Remember the EAP is a source of help for confidential problem solving.
2. Use safety equipment and avoid shortcuts. Young workers have a natural sense of invincibility. This is normal, but you can be led to believe that you are not likely to get killed or injured. The opposite is true.
3. Whenever available, participate in agency training on using equipment or machinery. Don't miss training and safety workshops. Inexperience and lack of training equal increased risk.
4. Don't shy away from asking questions about safety issues. The younger you are, the harder it may seem to be assertive and ask for the proper safety equipment to perform a task.
5. If in doubt about how to perform a task or how to handle a piece of equipment, ask. Unwillingness to ask questions can place you at risk of injury.

How far from the tree? For the Generations



Do you have questions about your family history of possible physical or mental health concerns? It may be time to ask, and then prepare a record for future generations of your family.

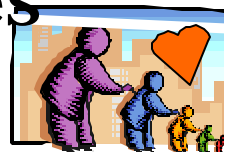
Often, these matters are not shared. With current, or even future technology, it may be possible to address issues in an effective manner, if the information is available to health care providers when needed. Ask specific questions of parents, grandparents or other relatives you can speak to, in confidence. You may learn of a history of heart or other physical tendencies that can be avoided with purposeful diet or wellness plans. Addressing early signs of many mental disorders can be minimized or controlled with medication or therapy. Leave future generations a gift of this history.

Your LOCUS DETERMINES Your FOCUS!

Do you believe that your life is the result of decisions you have made, and that almost nothing has happened to you by chance? Or, do you believe that outside influences have determined your fate? This is called one's "locus of control." Locus of control is learned when growing up, and serves as a starting point in our struggle to solve tough life problems. Although most of us have a balance between these two views, examining one's locus of control and making a shift toward one view over the other can often help you quickly spot tough solutions to difficult problems. Still stumped? Ask your EAS Professional!



Employees Sweet on Smuckers



A 26-year veteran of the J.M Smucker Company **used his** own money to build a monument of thanks to his employer. The company of jam and jelly fame (and 115 other products) is No. 1 on Fortune magazine's list of the best companies to work for this year.

The untold story about Smuckers is that employees have successfully adopted management's philosophy for how to treat their coworkers: Listen with your full attention, look for the good in others, have a sense of humor, and say thank you for a job well done. The result — a company with exceptionally high morale.

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